

SINGLE FAMILY RENTAL REGISTRATION FAQ



ORDINANCE NO. 2020-714 RESIDENTIAL RENTAL REGISTRATION REGULATIONS Sec. 10-120

Question: What is the basic concept of this ordinance?

Answer: This ordinance requires all single family, duplex and townhouse residential rental units to be registered with the City of Cedar Hill. Additionally, every residential rental unit must have an RRCO (Residential Rental Certificate of Occupancy) before it can be occupied by a tenant.

Question: Was there any public participation in the development of this program?

Answer: Yes. The City Council insisted on public input and three Single Family Rental Registration (SFRR) Committee meetings were conducted during August 2020. Committee members included representative landlords, tenants, realtors, crime watch leaders, PID leaders and HOA officials. Additionally, four City Council presentations took place over the last two years at meetings where citizens had opportunities to provide input and express their views on this program. Overall, the final program reflected in the adopted ordinance was shaped substantially by the public and tailored specifically to Cedar Hill.

Question: How often does an owner have to register their property?

Answer: Registration is yearly - per rolling calendar year (Example: Initial Registration is March 10, 2021. The Renewal Registration date would be March 10, 2022.) Any day after that renewal date is considered late and a Late Registration Fee would apply.

Question: If an owner registers his/her property once with the city, why is a registration required every year?

Answer: Annual registration is required so that the city can proactively detect and maintain current contact and/or property ownership information which, without this program, can change at any time without the city being made aware. Current property ownership information is a critical piece of an effective neighborhood services program and is necessary for the city to be responsive to neighborhood concerns and issues. Other possible sources of this information, County Appraisal Districts, for example, have proven to be unreliable in that the data is sometimes not updated in a timely manner and detailed property owner information may not be readily apparent, particularly for corporate owners.

Question: How does an owner register a property?

Answer: There are several ways to register a rental property- The owner can visit the office to fill out the forms and pay in person, or the owner can submit the forms via email and pay online. More information is available on our web page at www.cedarhilltx.com/sfrr.

Question: What are the fees?

Initial Registration of Property and/or Change of Ownership	\$50.00
Registration Renewal	\$25.00
Late Registration Fee	\$75.00
Residential Rental Certificate of Occupancy (RRCO)	\$25.00

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Question: Why are the fees necessary?

Answer: The fees charged are only those necessary to recover the cost of providing and administering this program, and include items such as staff time dedicated to this program, application processing and tracking, public education materials creation and distribution and other program associated costs.

Question: What is a Residential Rental Certificate of Occupancy (RRCO) and how long is it good for?

Answer: An RRCO is issued before a tenant can move into the rental unit and is a document required by the Utility Services Department before water can be turned on. An RRCO application must be submitted by the property owner along with payment before it is issued, and the application can be submitted in person or via email. (RRCO issuance turn-around time should be within 24 business hours if all the information provided is correct.) The only time a new RRCO is required is at tenant change. Issuance of an RRCO will trigger an exterior inspection of the property.

Question: What gets inspected during the RRCO exterior inspection and does it affect tenants moving in?

Answer: Code Enforcement will only conduct an exterior inspection of the property in conjunction with issuance of an RRCO. They will look for things such as damage to exterior structure/surface, fences, house number visibility, trash and debris, weeds and grass, etc. Code Enforcement has 30 days to go out to inspect the property upon issuance of an RRCO. This will not affect the tenant moving in. The tenant can move in as soon as the RRCO has been issued.

Question: Can a landlord or tenant request an interior inspection by the City of the residential rental property?

Answer: Yes, the landlord can request an interior inspection when the property is vacant and the tenant can request an inspections at any time during their occupancy. The inspection by city officials can include checks for structural, electrical, mechanical or plumbing problems, ceiling leaks, smoke detector checks, and insect or rodent infestation. The property owner or landlord has thirty days to correct or repair any inspection failures or deficiencies found during this inspection. Note that these inspections will be conducted during normal business hours only with the consent of the party requesting the inspection. Note also that these inspections refer only to those performed by the city. The rental lease explaining the relationship between the landlord and the tenant may also include provisions for interior or exterior inspections and the tenant should be familiar with the provisions of the lease.

Question: Does this program mean renters are being treated differently than owners in owner-occupied homes?

Answer: No. Owners in owner-occupied homes are subject to the same Property Code and Building Maintenance Standards as renters and will continue to after implementation of this program. All homes in Cedar Hill are inspected externally on a regular, periodic basis and this program simply ties the exterior inspection for a rental unit to the issuance of the RRCO. Just as renters may, any homeowner can request an interior inspection by city staff if they desire and only the same life-safety items would be checked on such an inspection.

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Question: What are the responsibilities of the property owner or agent?

Answer: The owner of any property in the city, whether vacant or occupied, is responsible for the maintenance of all structures, equipment, appliances and accessories to the property in compliance with all applicable ordinances and permit requirements in force in the City.

No owner shall permit the occupancy of property that is not in safe or sanitary conditions.

The owner shall be responsible for paying all abatement fees, taxes and liens assessed on the property.

The owner shall notify the City of any eviction notice issued to a tenant. Furthermore, the owner shall provide a plan for the clean-up and removal of personal items from the property 24 hours after an eviction and shall be responsible for clean-up and removal.

Question: What are the responsibilities of the tenant:

Answer: The tenants of any property are responsible for keeping the interior and exterior of the property in a clean, orderly and sanitary condition. All interior and exterior areas of residential rental units should be kept clean and free from any accumulation of rubbish, trash, debris, filth, or garbage.

No tenant or owner should neglect, damage, deface, or destroy any part of the property or allow any conditions detrimental to safety or sanitation or in violation of any ordinance.

Additional Questions or Concerns?

Contact us at:

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